



*United States Attorney
Southern District of New York*

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**U.S. CHARGES ALLEGED BRONX GANG LEADER IN CONNECTION
WITH OPERATION OF DRUG LABORATORY NEAR PUBLIC SCHOOL**

JAMES B. COMEY, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, today announced the arrest of ANGELO CRUZ, the alleged leader of a motorcycle gang calling itself the "Satan's Soldiers." Prior to December 19, 2002, when law enforcement seized a methamphetamine laboratory and arrested other alleged members of the gang, it operated the lab in a Bronx lot located across the street from a New York City elementary school, it was charged. In addition to producing methamphetamine at that location, the gang stored a small arsenal of weapons and ammunition there, according to a Complaint unsealed today.

Methamphetamine is a controlled substance, which until recently, has been primarily abused in the Southwestern and Western United States. It is typically manufactured in clandestine laboratories located in that region, as well as in Mexico. Because the chemicals used in clandestine

methamphetamine labs are explosive and often poisonous, such operations can present a significant danger to the surrounding community, according to a Complaint unsealed when other alleged gang members were arrested.

In this case, law enforcement agents learned of the lab in the Bronx in December 2002 after they stopped one of the lab's operators for a routine traffic violation. Agents learned that the clandestine lab was located in a lot at 1290 Beach Avenue in the Bronx (the "Lot") which was run by the "Satan's Soldiers" gang.

Upon searching the Lot, which is located across the street from Community School 47, the agents discovered a trailer containing what appeared to be a fully operational methamphetamine lab. In a second trailer, the agents found guns and ammunition, including an Intertec Tec-9 with a defaced serial number, two magazine cartridges, and 47 live rounds of ammunition, as well as a black shotgun along with 17 live 12-gauge shotgun shells, according to the prior Complaint.

Video cameras were found stationed on and around the Lot, apparently for the purpose of detecting law enforcement, and Video monitors connected to the cameras were found in a rear building structure on the lot, which served as the gang's clubhouse and headquarters, it was charged. In the clubhouse, agents also found various weapons including a loaded Mossburg pistol grip shotgun, a Remington .22 caliber handgun, four 12-gauge shotgun shells, four gun silencers, six knives, a taser

gun, a slingshot, and a pair of brass knuckles, according to the Complaint. The agents also found more than \$43,000 in cash.

CRUZ, the alleged leader of the Satan's Soldiers Gang, was located late yesterday by members of a DEA-NYPD Task Force and arrested. CRUZ is the fourth and highest ranking member of the gang to be arrested, it is alleged. The other alleged members who were arrested on December 20, 2002, are JOHN WILLIAM KELLY, RALPH WALTER HALL and PETER SCHULTZ. Each of the defendants faces narcotics charges that carry a maximum penalty of life in prison.

Mr. COMEY praised the Drug Enforcement Administration, the New York City Police Department and the Bronx District Attorney's Office for their outstanding work and cooperation in this case.

Assistant United States Attorney BENJAMIN M. LAWSKY is in charge of the prosecution.

The charges contained in the Complaint are merely accusations, and the defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.